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1. A method of completing a long distance call connection through the public switched telephone network (PSTN) from a personal communication assistant (PCA), said method comprising:

- accepting call request information specified by a subscriber using an interface supported by the PCA;
- formulating a call connection request message based on the call request information, the call connection request message including a point of presence (POP) code; and
- forwarding the call connection request message via a communications connection established between the PCA and a long distance service provider server (LDSP) to initiate the call connection.

2. The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said POP code specifies a particular POP in the PSTN from which the call connection is to be originated.

3. The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said POP code is associated with a POP override parameter for identifying to the LDSP whether the specified POP must be used to originate the call connection, or may be overridden if a call optimization algorithm indicates a more cost-effective POP for originating the call.

4. The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least a part of the call request information is selected from a directory stored on the PCA.

5. The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said call request information is specified in call information fields within said interface.

6. The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein formulating the call connection request message is initiated when the registered subscriber selects a dial icon on the interface.

7. The method as claimed in claim 6, wherein the application is adapted to retrieve subscriber information stored by the application on the PCA when the call connection request is formulated.

8. The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein forwarding the call connection request message includes a step of determining whether a packet network connection is available from said PCA and, if the packet network connection is not available, attempting to establish the packet network connection in order to enable sending the request.

9. The method as claimed in claim 8, wherein said packet network connection is a wireless connection.

10. The method as claimed in claim 8, wherein forwarding the call connection request message includes a step of forwarding subscriber identification information.

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11. The method as claimed in claim 10, further comprising steps of:

- receiving a confirmation message from the LDSP confirming the subscriber identification information; and
- forwarding the call connection request message containing the call request information.

12. A method of completing a long distance call connection through the public switched telephone network (PSTN) from a call completion application operating locally on a personal communication assistant (PCA) adapted for communications with a long distance service provider server via a packet network, said method comprising steps of:

- receiving a call connection request message at the long distance service provider server, sent from the PCA;
- verifying user identification information contained in the message;
- processing the call connection request message to initiate a call connection according to the call request information; and
- sending a notification message to the PCA to notify a subscriber that the call connection is in progress..

13. The method as claimed in claim 12, wherein processing the call connection request message includes:

- identifying a point of presence (POP) code contained therein; and

b) determining if a POP override parameter has been set by the subscriber.

14. The method as claimed in claim 13, wherein if it is determined that the POP override parameter is enabled, said LDSP consults a routing pairs table to determine a POP within the PSTN to originate the call connection requested.

15. The method as claimed in claim 14, wherein the POP override parameter is associated with a POP code.

16. The method as claimed in claim 15, wherein the POP code is selected to initiate a cost-effective call connection.

17. The method as claimed in claim 12, wherein the step of processing the call connection request message further comprises steps of:

- formulating a call request packet based on information contained in the call connection request message; and
- forwarding the call request packet to a call controller to effect a call connection from a point of presence (POP) within the PSTN based on information contained in said call connection request message.

18. The method as claimed in claim 12, wherein said step of receiving a call connection request message further comprises steps of:

- receiving a first message from said PCA containing subscriber identification information;

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- b) sending a confirmation message to said PCA authorizing said user identification information; and
- c) receiving a second message from the PCA containing call origination and destination information identifying call origination and destination addresses to be joined by a call connection.

19. The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the call request information specified by the subscriber includes a call scheduling parameter.

20. The method as claimed in claim 19, wherein the call scheduling parameter includes call scheduling information for scheduling a call connection.

21. The method as claimed in claim 20, wherein the call scheduling information includes a date and a time for establishing the call connection.

22. The method as claimed in claim 19, wherein the call scheduling parameter includes a notification response parameter instructing the LDSP server to send a notification message to each party identified in said call request information.

23. The method as claimed in claim 22, wherein the notification response parameter further includes a confirmation response parameter instructing the LDSP to return a confirmation message to the PCA confirming the availability of each party for the call connection.

24. A system for establishing a long distance call connection through the PSTN, using a personal communication assistant (PCA), said system comprising:

- a long distance service provider (LDSP) server adapted to establish said call connection through the PSTN in response to a call connection request message received from a registered subscriber;
- an application adapted to operate locally on the PCA to accept call request information from the registered subscriber; formulate the call connection request message based on the call request information; and communicate the call connection request message to the long distance service provider server;

wherein the long distance service provider server is adapted to effect a long distance call connection on the basis of the call connection request message.

25. The system as claimed in claim 24, wherein said long distance service provider server further comprises:

 a call controller adapted to receive a call connection information packet from said LDSP server related to the call connection request message and establish said the call connection.

26. The system as claimed in claim 24, wherein said application includes means for establishing a communication connection with said LDSP server to communicate the call connection request message.

27. The system as claimed in claim 26, wherein said means for establishing a communication connection includes

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means for determining if an existing packet network connection is available, and means for establishing a packet network connection if a connection is not available.

28. The system as claimed in claim 26, wherein said means for establishing a communication connection is a wireless interface.
29. The system as claimed in claim 24, wherein said application further comprises means for encrypting call connection request messages.
30. The system as claimed in claim 24, wherein the call connection request message includes a POP code specified in the application by the registered subscriber for indicating a preferred point of presence within the PSTN for originating the call connection.
31. The system as claimed in claim 24, wherein the call connection request message includes a POP override parameter that may be set to instruct the LDSP server to use a least cost optimization algorithm to select a POP for establishing the call connection.
32. The system as claimed in claim 24, wherein the call connection request is for a conference call and the least cost algorithm automatically selects a POP for establishing a call connection.
33. The system as claimed in claim 24, wherein the call connection request is for a satellite call and the least cost algorithm uses a special call pair routing

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table to determine a least cost POP for originating the call to ensure that a satellite leg of the call is completed at a least cost.

34. The system as claimed in claim 31, wherein the least cost optimization algorithm selects a POP to minimize the cost of the call connection based on origination and destination numbers contained in the call connection request message.
35. The system as claimed in claim 24, wherein the call connection request message includes a call scheduling parameter that includes call scheduling information for scheduling the establishment of a call connection.
36. The system as claimed in claim 35, wherein the call scheduling information includes a date and a time to establish the call connection.
37. The system as claimed in claim 36, wherein the LDSP server is adapted to verify the call scheduling information and schedule the call connection according to the specified call scheduling information.
38. The system as claimed in claim 35, wherein the call scheduling parameter includes a notification response parameter instructing the LDSP to send a call scheduling notification message to each party address specified in the call connection request message.

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39. The system as claimed in claim 38, wherein the notification message includes a means for providing an availability response message to the LDSP in response to the notification message.

40. The system as claimed in claim 38, wherein the notification response parameter further includes a confirmation response parameter instructing the LDSP to return a confirmation response to the PCA indicating the availability of each party.

41. The system as claimed in claim 38, wherein the party address is a telephone address and the notification message is an automated voice message.

42. The system as claimed in claim 38, wherein the party address is an electronic mail address and the notification message is an automated electronic mail message.

43. The system as claimed in claim 37, wherein the LDSP server is further adapted to receive a reply to the notification message from each of the called parties and send a corresponding scheduling confirmation message to the application operating locally on the PCA.

44. The system as claimed in claim 37, wherein the LDSP places call scheduling information in a call queue and the call controller retrieves the call scheduling information from the call queue to effect the call connection.

45. The system as claimed in claim 44, wherein call scheduling data is placed in the call scheduling queue in accordance with a scheduled date and time for effecting the call connection.

46. A call completion application adapted to operate locally on a personal communication assistant (PCA) to establish a communication connection with a long distance service provider (LDSP) server, said call completion application comprising:

- a) means for accepting call connection information input by a subscriber;
- b) means for formulating a call connection request message based on said call connection information;
- c) means for determining if an existing packet network connection is available;
- d) means for establishing a packet network connection if an existing packet network connection is not available; and
- e) means for sending the call connection request message to said LDSP server using the packet network connection.

47. A call completion application as claimed in claim 46, wherein the means for receiving call connection information is a graphical user interface.

48. A call completion application as claimed in claim 46, wherein the means for sending the call connection request message further comprises means for sending

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user identification information to the LDSP server for verification.

49. A call completion application as claimed in claim 46, further comprising means for closing the communication connection after a call connection is initiated.

50. A computer-readable memory storing the call completion application as claimed in claim 46.

51. The call completion application as claimed in claim 46, further comprising a programmable speed dial feature.

52. The call completion application as claimed in claim 47, wherein the graphical user interface includes a field for accepting a point of presence (POP) code.

53. The call completion application as claimed in claim 52, wherein the interface further includes a field that accepts a parameter for indicating that the LDSP may select a POP for originating the call.

54. The call completion application as claimed in claim 46, further comprising a call scheduling feature for inputting call scheduling information.

55. The call completion application as claimed in claim 54, further comprising a notification feature for notifying each call party specified in the call connection information of a call scheduling procedure initiated by the subscriber.

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56. The call completion application as claimed in claim 55, wherein the notification feature may query the call completion application for a notification address for sending a notification message.

57. The call completion application as claimed in claim 56, wherein the notification address is an electronic mail address stored on the PCA.

58. The call completion application as claimed in claim 56, wherein the notification address is a telephone address corresponding to the telephone address specified in the call connection information.

59. The call completion application as claimed in claim 55, further comprising means to display a confirmation response message from the LDSP server.

60. The call completion application as claimed in claim 59, wherein the confirmation response message advises of a call party's availability for the call connection.

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